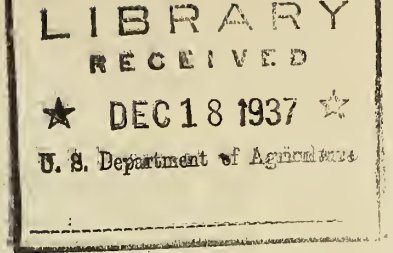


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HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR



Christmas Talking List - from Turkey to Honey to Snow Suits.

A dialogue between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. Morse Salisbury, Office of Information, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network of 48 associate NBC stations, Thursday, December 9, 1937.

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MR. SALISBURY:

Here we are in Washington. And here again is Ruth Van Deman, your reporter for the Bureau of Home Economics.

Ruth, around this time of year a home economist's lot must be a busy one.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Busy is right, Morse. I have a lot of ground to cover today.

MR. SALISBURY:

Fine. Steam right ahead.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

A whole flock of pre-Christmas questions have been coming in. So, Morse, if you'll hold this memo here and check me now and then we'll go right down the line.

MR. SALISBURY:

O.K. Item 1 reads Turkey - what size turkey?

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Oh yes. That came from a young Virginia homemaker. She wants to have a buffet supper for 18 guests some evening during Christmas week. What's bothering her is whether to buy two small turkeys or one large bird.

MR. SALISBURY:

I'll bet I can guess your answer. One large.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Yes. I think one turkey weighing about 18 or 20 pounds would be the better buy for her. That is of course if her oven is large enough to hold that big a bird.

As far as the cooking goes it would be less trouble to roast one large bird than two small ones. And take less fuel and less time probably. It may seem a little odd, but our records show that a large turkey if it's fat and tender, cooks at a faster rate per pound than a small bird. So, when you add up the time that you have to watch, and turn, and baste the bird in the oven, you'll find it totals up to almost the same for the large and the small.

And for cold turkey, to slice and serve at the party, I believe the larger bird would be more economical. There'd be more meat in proportion to bone. And not so much waste in head and feet and loss in drawing, - all of which of course figure in the weight of a turkey as you buy it in the market.

By the way, while we're on the subject of cooking turkeys, I want to thank all of you who've written me since trying our directions on the Thanksgiving bird. Everybody seems to like the constant temperature way of roasting. Ever so many people have told us that their Thanksgiving turkeys came out perfectly, by keeping the oven between 300 to 350 degrees from start to finish. That moderate temperature certainly does let the juice stay in the meat. And yet allows the outside to take on that beautiful golden brown. The "bloom" as Lucy Alexander calls it. To me, the outward and visible sign of inward perfection in roast turkey.

Well so much for turkey.

MR. SALISBURY:

No, another question. Do you still have some of those mimeographed sheets on how to roast turkey this modern way?

MISS VAN DEMAN:

I think so. If not, we can have more run off very quickly.

MR. SALISBURY:

I'll make that a definite offer in a few minutes.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Since the question of mail has come up, I'd just like to say a word for the girls in my office. They take the greatest interest in the radio requests. When we get lots of them, as we did for Apple Recipes and the turkey roasting directions, they go around looking pleased as Punch. They don't seem to care how hard they have to work to keep up with the wishes of Farm and Home Hour listeners.

MR. SALISBURY:

That's mighty nice of them. Well, here's Item 2. Nut stuffing.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

That was from another young homemaker. Still a little timid about experimenting. She wants to know how to put the nuts in nut stuffing and how many.

MR. SALISBURY:

When is a nut stuffing stuffed full of nuts?

MISS VAN DEMAN:

That's it, depending on how rich you want it. You can add anywhere from a quarter of a pound to a pound of shelled nuts to the regular mixture of bread crumbs and seasoning. Just stir the nuts in the last thing before filling the hot stuffing into the bird.

Almost any kind of mild flavored nuts are good. Boiled chestnuts. Blanched almonds. Last Christmas at home I tried a mixture of hazel nuts and

the little pine nuts that come from the Southwest. Everybody seemed to like that combination very much.

Of course one of the ways of getting a rich blending of flavors in a stuffing is to cook the chopped celery and onion and parsley in the butter for a few minutes first. Then add the bread crumbs and let them heat through. Then the savory seasoning and the nuts. And pack this stuffing hot into the bird. It's dry enough so that it will absorb all the juices that cook into it from the meat and yet come out rich and crumbly.

MR. SALISBURY:

The perfect vehicle for turkey gravy.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Yes sir. "Them's my sentiments too."

MR. SALISBURY:

Well, Ruth, this next here on your list looks like honey c c c.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Honey cakes, candies, and cookies. That was a request for recipes using honey so the cakes and candy will stay fresh through the Christmas holidays.

Of course that goes back to the peculiar chemical make-up of honey that enables it to take up moisture from the air - its hygroscopic quality. That's why honey cakes and candies keep their soft, moist texture for a long time - and sometimes become more moist the longer they stand.

Also honey doesn't crystallize when you cook it, the way ordinary sugar does. And it has even more sweetening power. But you can't just substitute it cup for cup for granulated sugar in the ordinary recipe.

I'm answering that letter with a copy of Elizabeth Whiteman's honey leaflet. I can't take time here to give recipes. But this printed leaflet has excellent tested directions for making nougat, and caramels, and turkish paste, and several kinds of honey cookies and cakes.

And here's one for honey nut bread, which would make an excellent last-minute Christmas gift. Something very nice to have on hand for sandwiches during the holidays.

I wonder sometimes why we don't give more gifts like that. A few years ago I spent a Christmas in Florence, Italy. I noticed people were carrying their Christmas greetings to each other in the form of gaily wrapped cakes and sweetmeats. Evidently over there they don't exchange so many gadgets. And maybe they don't have so many white elephants on their closet shelves.

MR. SALISBURY:

(The which I hope they don't.) I don't know whether I'm seeing straight or not here, Ruth. The next two items look like - self-help bib for grandma. And bachelor uncle's snow suit.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Perfectly correct. A grandmother and a bachelor uncle heard our talk

last month about Miss Scott's new designs for self-help clothes for youngsters. Grandmother wants to know how to make a self-help bib for her 2-year old grandson. Bachelor uncle wants the "specifications" on snow suits. He's buying one for his young niece. He wants it the very best - educationally, psychologically, and comfortably.

MR. SALISBURY:

Conscientious uncle.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Absolutely. Again the only complete answer is a bulletin. The new one on Fabrics and Designs for Children's Clothes. It has a diagram of the self-help bib with all the measurements anyone needs to cut the pattern, and a picture of a very smiling little girl wearing the bib.

By the way, as the material for a child's bib, cotton ratine or lightweight terry cloth (bath toweling) seems to be the best. Soft, thick fabrics like those absorb the moisture when a child spills his food. They are not bulky or scratchy around the neck. And they are easy to wash and don't have to be ironed. It seems that a bib like this, which a youngster can put on and take off by himself, is something more than just a piece of cloth to protect his clothes. It helps him to coordinate his muscles and develops his self reliance.

MR. SALISBURY:

That solves my worst Christmas shopping problem. It's self-help bibs to develop the muscles and the self reliance of Everett Mitchell and Homesteaders, and now proceed with the snow suits.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

His niece is a young tomboy he says. So I am sure he wants a one-piece suit that allows her plenty of reach and stretch.

Raglan sleeves, for instance, with large armholes to fit over the sweater comfortably and not make her look and feel like a piece of overstuffed furniture.

And snug knit wristlets and anklets to keep out cold air and snow. But be sure the sleeves and legs of the suit are loose and give some room to grow in.

For the long center front opening, the youngster will probably get the most fun from one of the slide fasteners. But it should have a firm strip of material underneath to keep the slide from catching and tearing the dress.

For the cloth, it should be firm, but lightweight, and warm. And washable and colorfast. A youngster's snow suit has to take a hard beating. It's no dainty dress-up garment. But I'm sure this methodical gentleman will find a good one. Here's luck to him. And to all the others I've mentioned on this Christmas talking list.

MR. SALISBURY:

Ruth, you certainly have covered the ground - from turkey to honey to snow suits.

MISS VAN DEMAN:

Thank you, sir. And I'll be skipping along and leave you the job of checking over the bulletins.